

Education and Standards Committee

Meeting Minutes 5th April 2016

PHECC office, Naas

Present

Valerie Small
Shane Knox
Brian Bruno
Sarah Cain
Maeve Donnelly
Roísín McGuire
David Menzies
Sandra Fleming
Paul Lambert
Michael Dineen
Mr Ray Lacey

Apologies

Derek Fox
Stephen McMahon
Glenna Woods

In Attendance

Kathleen Walsh
Brian Power
Jacqueline Egan
Margaret Bracken

1. Chair's business:

The Chair welcomed the members and apologies were noted. Condolences were expressed for Mark Doyle's mother who has very recently passed away. The Chair welcomed Kathleen Walsh and Margaret Bracken. Ms Walsh has replaced Pauline Dempsey as PHECC Programme Development Officer and Ms Bracken has temporarily replaced Deirdre Borland as Programme Development Support Officer.

1.1 Minutes of 24th November 2015 and matters arising

Resolution: That the minutes of the Education and Standards Committee 24th November 2015 be approved.

Proposed: Shane Knox

Seconded: Sarah Cain

Carried without dissent

2. Education and Training Standards

2.1 POMs re: SI 449 Medicinal Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) (Amendment) No. 2) Regulations 2015

Ms Walsh discussed with the members the new Education and Training Standards for Cardiac First Response (CFR) and Medications for Listed Organisations (SI 449 of 2015) and the new Clinical Practice Guidelines. These Standards and CPGs were approved by Council at the meeting on 10th March. A sub-committee, of which both Dr Shane Knox and Roisín McGuire are members, was convened to finalise a training programme for the management and administration of medications for non-medical personnel.

The Chair acknowledged the work done to date, and the possibility of having the remaining work done via an expression of interest with the input of a subgroup was explored.

Following discussion the Chair directed that the lesson plans and modules completed by the subgroup would be used to as a template for the development of additional modules. The members were requested to give feedback on the present material to Ms Walsh by Thursday 14th April.

2.2 FAR and OFA Standard – Health and Safety Authority

Ms Walsh informed the members that the PHECC Executive has been engaging in ongoing discussions with the HSA regarding the transition of the OFA from the HSA to PHECC within the FAR framework and standards. The Occupational First Aid Assessment Agent (OFAAA) is appointed by the Health and Safety Authority to carry out the assessment and registration of training providers and PHECC may explore similar process and structure into the future. The HSA recently consulted with its stakeholders including QQI, regarding this proposed transition and was favourably received by the current OFA providers.

There is a proposed timeframe of the end of last quarter for completion of this handover.

Clarification was sought regarding PHECC and the National Framework of Qualifications as PHECC are currently not on the framework and it was suggested that this should be explored.

2.3 CFR Training Products

An update from Ray Carney, project lead was included in the meeting papers.

3. Paramedicine Competency Framework update (UCD Centre for EMS)

Dr Menzies gave an update to the members. The UCD centre for EMS was awarded the contract in October 2015 to research and supply competency standards for EMT, Paramedic and Advanced Paramedic qualification. The standards framework is to support education and training standards, curriculum and CPG development, and learning outcomes for student practitioners at all levels. The accompanying syllabus/curriculum should be specific.

PHECC do not currently have a competency standard and are considering converting existing standards into competency standards. Dr Menzies noted the challenge to fit existing standards into a competency framework and instead he would like see curriculum changes to present standards to reflect competency and gave reference to the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland Competency Framework. The paper will be reviewed by the PHECC Executive and submitted to Council at its next meeting.

4. Continuous Professional Competence (Dundee Consulting)

The final report on CPC from Deanna Williams of Dundee Consulting Group Ltd. was included in the meeting papers. Dr Knox commented that the expert external CPC group set up by PHECC as part of consultation for the paper worked well.

The Committee expressed concern that EMTs have communicated their frustration about the lack of clarity regarding the CPC framework and registrants' responsibilities. It was highlighted that registrants and the RIs need to be kept informed to ensure proper support as most EMTs are volunteers. Robust discussion followed and the following points were agreed for action in the short term:

1. Set up an e-portfolio
2. Assessors panel is a priority for now
3. Engage with EMTs and commence as soon as possible before engaging with practitioners at paramedic and advanced paramedic levels.

The following points were raised by Dr Knox as part of the discussion

- Engage with EMTs – update them on current CPC status, meaningful engagement (as stated in PHECC Voice 2011)
- Accredited programmes for CPC (at a later stage)
- Hub for CPC information – develop on-line presence, dedicated webpage etc.
- Review portfolios – electronic or hard copies in the interim
- Commence random audit of EMTs as soon as possible and before the end of this 3-year cycle as described previously to EMTS
- Develop logbooks and portfolios for use by EMTs and make them available on the CPC site
- Provide clarification for 'patient contacts', 'case studies' etc.
- Provide support and guidance for reflective practice for EMTs through educational sessions, and include this in their Standards of Education
- Address the issue of mentoring
- Clear and transparent process for selecting EMT CPC reviewers – and that these are EMT reviewers (peer)
- Appropriate and standardised training for reviewers
- Paramedics and Advanced Paramedics should be encouraged to mentor EMTs

Any additional feedback regarding the report is to be submitted to Ms Walsh by Friday 22nd April for discussion at the next committee meeting on 24th May.

5. Educational Entry Requirements update (RCSI T Kearns Paper)

A paper prepared by Thomas Kearns, RCSI, on the educational entry requirements for courses leading to the award of NQEMT Paramedic and Advanced Paramedic in Ireland was included with the meeting papers. Some members expressed that the paper was broad in its scope and greater attention to detail and structure was suggested. A key draft recommendation centred on maintaining the current standards of a minimum of 6 passes in the leaving certificate exam.

The members to give feedback to Ms Walsh by Friday 22nd April for discussion at the next committee meeting.

6. Application for UL Paramedic Studies – status update

Ms Walsh updated the members on the application submitted by UL for recognition of an honours degree programme which involves a component of clinical practice placements external to Ireland. Conditional approval was granted by the PHECC Director. The application is currently under review, with a report expected to be prepared for the next Committee meeting. It was noted that there is a three month period for final decisions regarding approval of a programme.

The Committee will make a recommendation to Council for its final decision.

7. Team Resuscitation CPGs – information purposes

Two CPGs were included with the meeting papers for information purposes.

8. Quality Review Framework for RIs

Ms Walsh explained that all RIs have been requested to carry out and submit their Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for 2016. These reports are currently being reviewed and will guide the Quality Review (QR) panel's target list for site visits to RIs for 2016.

9. Exam Quality Group – Terms of Reference

As the current Council's term of office and all committees come to an end in June, Council have requested that all committee's terms of reference be reviewed. Ms Egan seeks to expand the terms of reference for the Exam Quality Group and the Examiner Panel. Also as there are only 4 EMT OSCEs per year not all examiners on the panel can fulfill the criteria of two exams per year in order to remain on the PHECC examiner panel. It was suggested to change this requirement to 2 exams per 2 year period.

The members were requested and agreed to give feedback to Ms Egan by Friday 22nd April.

10. Education and Standards Committee - Terms of Reference

Council have requested that all committee's terms of reference be reviewed. Ms Walsh asked Committee members to consider the following points as part of its review

- duration and frequency of meetings
- relevancy to the workings and output of the committee
- benefits and constraints

Members to give feedback to Ms Walsh by Friday 22nd April.

11. AOB

Communication was received regarding PHECC Emergency First Response – Basic Tactical Emergency Care training standards relating to a request for changing criteria for applicants. The standards were discussed with reference to demonstrating a rationale for providing EFR in hostile or austere environments and it was clarified that originally the request came from the Military and Gardaí for this training programme. Mr Power gave further context for the development of this standard, emphasising the importance of PHECC'S role for protection of the public. A discussion ensued and the Chair proposed that members review the standard and include as an agenda item for the next meeting.

The meeting concluded. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 24th May.

Signed: 

Date: 20th June 2016.